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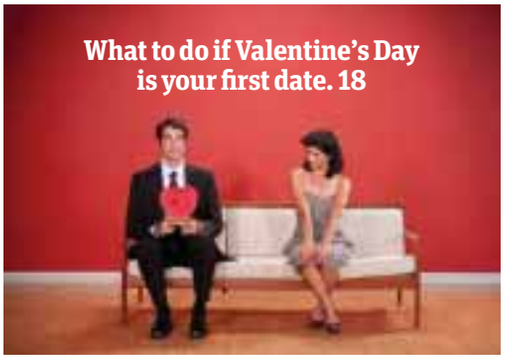
DECISION TIME FOR ISLANDERS

Kyle Okposo may be on the block. 20



What to do if Valentine's Day is your first date. 18

Five charged in fatal East Village blast. 4

THE SUPER ANTI-HERO

With 'Deadpool,' Ryan Reynolds gives you more than your usual comic book movie. 14

You can't see him, but that's Ryan Reynolds, playing a masked avenger out to kill the people who destroyed his life in the comedic Marvel movie "Deadpool." JOE LEDERER

DEAD HUSBAND WALKING

1 A Manhattan man will need more than a dozen roses to make up for the mistake he just made this Valentine's Day after he accidentally put his wife's clothes in a recycling bag. Mike Farrah told the New York Post that after he put the clothes, worth $1,000, in the bag, his son then threw them out, assuming they were trash. **CRISTABELLE TUMOLA**

IMGUR

AKAI GURLEY VERDICT

2 A jury found an NYPD officer guilty of manslaughter for firing into an unlit stairwell, killing an unarmed man. Twenty-seven-year-old New York cop Peter Liang shot Gurley on Nov. 20, 2014 during a routine patrol in East New York's Pink Houses. Liang was accused of accidentally shooting Gurley and then not tending to the injured man as he bled to death from a ricocheting bullet fired by Liang. Manslaughter can carry up to 15 years in prison. Sentencing will be handed down at a future hearing. **SAM NEWHOUSE**

MASSACRE TRIAL DELAYED

3 A judge delayed the federal trial for Dylann Roof, the man accused of shooting dead nine parishioners at a black church in Charleston last June after federal prosecutors said the government remained undecided on seeking the death penalty. It could be until April before a decision is announced. **REUTERS**

GETTY IMAGES

BRAVING THE COLD FOR COYOTES

7 Despite the cold Thursday, three PETA advocates clad only in body paint and faux fur accessories protested outside of Paragon Sports in Manhattan. The trio were there in opposition to the company's Canada Goose coyote-fur jackets, according to a PETA press release.

7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

CASSANDRA CALLAGHAN

'CRACKA ATTACK'

4 Police have released a video of a man they say attacked a subway rider last week while uttering anti-white statements. On Feb. 5 at about 9:45 p.m. the 44-year-old victim was on the southbound platform of the D and Q line at the Church Avenue subway station in Flatbush when he was approached by the suspect, according to authorities. The suspect them punched the victim in the face and said anti-white statements before fleeing the station, police said. According to the New York Daily News, the victim — identified as Randy Aveille of Brooklyn — had gotten on the train with his fiancée after having dinner. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**

NATO LAUNCHES MISSION

5 NATO ships are on their way to the Aegean Sea to help Turkey and Greece crack down on criminal networks smuggling refugees into Europe. Hours after NATO defense ministers agreed to use their maritime force in the eastern Mediterranean to help combat traffickers, Supreme Allied Commander Gen. Breedlove said he was working quickly to design the mission. **REUTERS**

NATO

GUN HOARDER ARRESTED

6 A Queens man has been charged with recklessly creating a threat to public safety after stockpiling a collection of weapons — including over 200 pounds of gunpowder and thousands of rounds of ammo — inside his one-bedroom apartment. Guo H. Shou, 33, of Rego Park was arraigned Tuesday night in Queens Criminal Court on charges of first-degree reckless endangerment and third-degree criminal possession of a weapon. According to prosecutors, members of the NYPD's Licensing Division and Organized Crime Investigation Division Task Force conducted an administrative pistol licensee review at Shou's home. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**

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Five charged in deadly explosion

The investigation centered on a gas pipe that could have been inappropriately accessed below one of the buildings.

JASON NUCKOLLS and ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork

An East Village gas explosion that destroyed three buildings and killed two people and injured more than a dozen has led to criminal charges against five people.

After a nearly 11-month-long investigation into blast at 121 Second Avenue last March 26, authorities have charged Maria Hrynenko, 56; her son Michael Hrynenko; 30, Athanasios Ioannidis, 59; Dilber Kukic, 40; and Andrew Trombettas, 57.

All face charges of second-degree manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, second-degree assault and first-degree offering a false instrument for filing, a charge related to filing fraudulent papers with the state.

According to prosecutors, in 2013 Maria Hrynenko hired Kukic as a general contractor to renovate several properties in the city, including 121 Second Ave.

Kukic then hired Ioannidis to conduct plumbing work at the location, authorities said. Ioannidis—who was not professionally licensed—allegedly paid his former partner, Trombettas, to use his master plumbing license and professional credentials to submit required documents to the city's Department of Buildings and Con Edison.

Trombettas is accused of renting his license to Ioannidis and helping to file false paperwork.

In early 2014, Hrynenko entered into lease agreements with tenants for all the apartments at the building—which was managed by her son Michael — though Con Ed had not yet approved the installation of gas meters for the units, according to prosecutors.

A memorial was created on Second Avenue after the blast. MILES DIXON, METRO

In July of that same year, Hrynenko told Kukic that gas to supply the apartments should be taken from Sushi Park's gas meter, authorities said. Ioannidis then illegally connected flexible hosing to the restaurant's meter to provide gas for the tenants, who were not informed of the source.

An investigation by Con Ed and the New York Fire Department showed the set up was unsafe and could likely disconnect, break or leak, prosecutors said. Con Ed turned off the gas supply, leaving both the restaurant and apartment building without gas. Hrynenko was advised to hire a licensed plumber to fix the problem.

Instead, a second illegal and unsafe gas-delivery system was created, authorities said.

By mid-April, Con Ed restored gas to the restaurant, while upstairs tenants continued to receive gas by way of the illegal gas-delivery system.

On March 26, 2015, at about 2 p.m., Con Ed employees arrived at 121 Second Ave. to perform an inspection. Before the inspection, Ioannidis and Kukic shut off the gas supply connecting 119 and 121 Second Ave. and opened the shut-off valves, authorities said. Con Ed did not approve the installation due to several deficiencies with the proposed gas meter location.

After failing the inspection, Kukic and Hrynenko's son went into the building basement and turned on the gas supply from 119 Second Ave. without checking whether the gas valves were open, prosecutors said. The shut-off valves, which were open, caused gas to flow through the pipes and out of the uncapped meter bars into the restaurant.

At about 3 p.m., a Sushi Park employee smelled gas and notified Hrynenko, who told Kukic to check what was causing the smell. According to authorities, surveillance footage shows Kukic and Michael Hrynenko entering the Sushi Park basement and then quickly running out of the restaurant without warning any of the patrons or workers.

The gas that had been flowing through the pipes then ignited and caused an explosion, authorities said.

Moises Locon, a busboy at Sushi Park, and Nicholas Figueroa, a diner, who were both inside the restaurant at the time of the explosion, were killed, and 13 others injured.

If convicted of manslaughter, Hrynenko, her son, Ioannidis, and Kukic face up to 15 years in prison.

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Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is escorted to a helicopter in handcuffs by Mexican navy marines at a navy hanger. GETTY IMAGES

Will 'El Chapo' be tried in Brooklyn?

Once an extradition agreement is reached, the reason for trying Guzman in the Eastern District is because "it's the strongest indictment."

JASON NUCKOLLS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

As the U.S. and Mexican governments reportedly work on a plan to extradite accused drug lord "El Chapo" Guzman to the United States, one law enforcement source indicates that his trial will take place in Brooklyn.

"It will be the Eastern District," the law enforcement source told Pix11 in a recent report. The Eastern District, located at Cadman Plaza in Brooklyn, is one of seven jurisdictions with a pending indictment against Guzman.

The process of extraditing Guzman from Mexico to the U.S. could take "one year or longer," Manuel Merino, the head of Mexico's extradition office, said in a related ABC report.

Once an extradition agreement is reached, the reason for trying Guzman in the Eastern District is because "it's the strongest indictment," the law enforcement source said to Pix11.

Homeland Security Police stand guard at the entrance of the U.S. Eastern District Courthouse. GETTY IMAGES

The Brooklyn indictment seeks a forfeiture of Guzman's property to the tune of $14 billion based on accusations of distributing cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana in the U.S. between 2002 and 2014.

Juan Pablo Badillo, Guzman's attorney, has filed six motions to rebuff extradition requests, ABC added.

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BRIEF

NYPD seeks Queens armed masturbation suspect

The NYPD seeks to identify an armed man believed to have masturbated in front of a woman at a Queens gas station.

Last Friday just after 10 p.m. at a BP gas station at 99-49 Horace Harding Expressway, a woman claimed the suspect initially approached her while displaying a handgun, police have reported.

In response, the woman locked herself inside her car. The suspect then returned to his vehicle, a gold GMC Yukon SUV, and masturbated with the door open, police added.

After he was finished, he screamed obscenities at the woman before driving away.

Police describe the suspect as a Hispanic man between the ages of 30 and 40, approximately 5-foot-7 to 5-foot-8 and 200 pounds.

Do you recognize this man? NYPD

Anyone with information should call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or visit www.nypdcrimestoppers.com. METRO

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A couple marries atop the Empire State Building. GETTY IMAGES

Couples to say 'I do' on top of the Empire State Building

Each newlywed pair gets the chance to enjoy the 360-degree views in the heart of New York City.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

New York City will be filled with magic this weekend, as nine lucky couples celebrate the happiest day of their lives — all while enjoying an amazing view in the heart of the Big Apple.

The Empire State Building will hold its 22nd annual Valentine's Day weddings celebration — the only day where couples can marry at the iconic site — starting early Sunday morning.

Last November, the Empire State Building launched its contest asking engaged couples and those looking to renew their vows to submit their love stories to win a chance to say "I do" on the 86th floor observatory.

The winning couples will begin to be wed at 8 a.m. on Sunday with all ceremonies officiated by Jean-Yves Ghazi, the director of the Empire State Building. One couple, who was married at the Empire State Building 10 years ago, will also be returning, but this time to renew their vows.

"Being part of anybody's special day where they declare and vow eternal, true love is magical for me," Ghazi said.

This will be Ghazi's second year officiating the weddings, and he said seeing the couples get married last year was a day filled with magic and amazement — especially when the couples didn't seem to mind the winter weather.

"It was terrific to watch the excitement and enthusiasm and their ability to embrace [the moment] despite the weather elements," Ghazi said. "They were glowing."

Ghazi added that the building also serves as a way for these couples to connect with the settings of iconic romantic films such as "Sleepless in Seattle" and "An Affair to Remember."

"Romance has always been at the heart of the Empire State Building and for these couples, they get to really associate their events at the same level as these celebrities," Ghazi said.

And although the weddings only occur once a year, Ghazi said the building is one that is always filled with love, with couples getting engaged or just taking a trip to the very top to end a romantic night.

For soon-to-be newlywed Stacey Price, who traveled from Arlington, Virginia, with her fiancé Andrew Frye for their big day on top of the "World's Most Famous Building," finding out that they had been selected as a winning couple was a big surprise — and it still hasn't kicked in.

She said she fell in love with the Empire State Building when she was 22 years old and traveled to New York City with her family. Although it was a forced trip, Price said the moment she arrived at the top of the building she was amazed with what she saw.

"One of the stops we made was the Empire State Building and when we made it to the top, I was overwhelmed," Price said. "It was one of the coolest things I experienced in my whole life at that point."

Price added that she is grateful they were chosen because they initially had no clue what they were going to do for their wedding.

The couple is set to be married at 11 a.m. on Valentine's Day and will be joined by their families — with Price's grandparents traveling from Alabama.

"We could see the Empire State Building from our taxi and that's when it hit us," Price said. "Your wedding day is special anyway but just to have it there is so surreal."

"It's all about making a difference in somebody's experience and making sure this is truly a memorable moment." Ghazi

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3 No trains between 96 St and 148 St
4 Woodlawn-bound trains skip 51, 68, 77, 96, 103, 110 and 116 Sts
5 2 trains replace the 5 Dyre Av Shuttle
6 Brooklyn Bridge-bound trains run express from
Parkchester to 3 Av-138 St
Pelham Bay Park-bound trains skip 51, 68, 77, 96, 103, 110, and 116 Sts
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DEMOCRATS, LET'S GET IN FORMATION

THE ERNEST OPINION

ERNEST OWENS
@MrErnestOwens

While my fellow liberals on social media relished rubbing in my face Bernie Sanders' margin of victory over Hillary Clinton in the New Hampshire Democratic primary — my frustration was directed somewhere else.

Real Clinton followers expected this to happen, because New Hampshire might as well be Vermont given how close the states are to one another.

But what startled me most about the primary was seeing Sanders' "revolution" gain momentum among Democrats, while another revolutionary reigned supreme in the GOP.

Donald Trump won a presidential primary. It's time for us to get serious right now.

I can't even laugh at his gaffes or try to ignore his prowess anymore.

Democrats right now are too busy taking cheap shots at each other over who's more progressive. The conversation has gone from a sincere intellectual debate to a petty indictment of racial communities and their voting habits. I'm sorry, but my black vote going to Hillary isn't me being brainwashed by "the establishment."

It's actually my personal understanding of dealing with a real-time crisis and shooting for immediate results. Voting for Hillary doesn't make me, an openly gay black millennial, not progressive.

Sanders supporters' litmus test on measuring such progressiveness doesn't account for what it actually is — progress, which is relative. Instead, those who have tried to divide the party on these matters have distorted history in order to make a point.

When folks say Hillary wasn't initially in favor of gay marriage in the late '90s, neither were many of your favorite liberal politicians, including President Obama. Even pop culture was dredged in homophobic content that wouldn't fly in today's times. But now many liberals are trying to point out a racial divide in the party.

It's time for Democrats to re-evaluate how they publicly bash their potential presidential candidates and play fair. Otherwise, we can lose it all.

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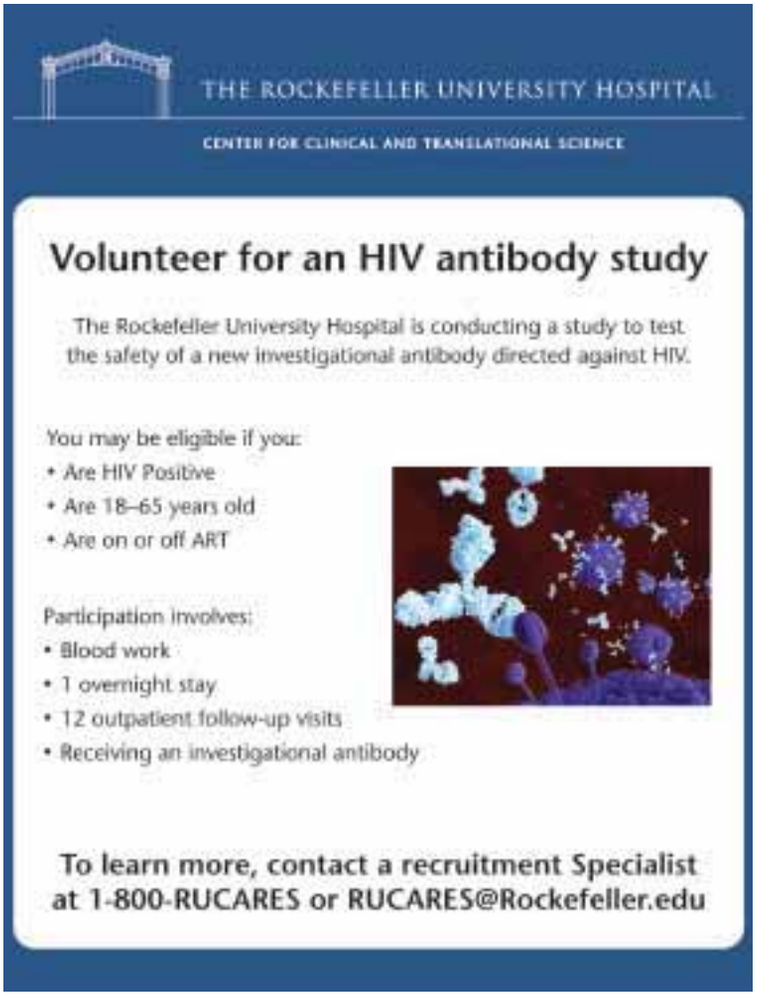
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BRIEF

South Korean protesters. GETTY IMAGES

South Korea made 'declaration of war': North Korea

North Korea said it was kicking out all South Koreans from the jointly run Kaesong industrial zone on Thursday, calling the South's move to suspend operations, in retaliation for Sunday's rocket launch by the North, a "declaration of war."

The North declared the industrial park, run by the rivals as a symbol of cooperation for more than a decade, a military control zone, the agency that handles its ties with Seoul said, according to the official KCNA news agency.

Dozens of South Korean trucks were already returning across the border earlier in the day, laden with goods, after the South said it was pulling out.

"Unpardonable is the puppet group's act of totally suspending the operation in [Kaesong], finding fault with the DPRK's H-bomb test and launch of a satellite," the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea said, referring to South Korea.

Isolated North Korea regularly dismisses the South as a puppet of the United States and just as regularly accuses both of acts of war against it.

DPRK is short for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. North Korea tested what it said was a hydrogen bomb on Jan. 6 and on Sunday launched a rocket, putting a satellite into orbit. REUTERS

55K
NORTH KOREANS EMPLOYED AT KAESONG

G, Einstein was right

Einstein's gravitational waves detected in scientific milestone.

Physicist David Reitze announces the discovery. GETTY IMAGES

Scientists have for the first time detected gravitational waves, ripples in space and time hypothesized by Albert Einstein a century ago, in a landmark discovery announced Thursday that opens a new window for studying the cosmos.

The researchers said they detected gravitational waves coming from two distant black holes — extraordinarily dense objects whose existence also was foreseen by Einstein — that orbited one another, spiraled inward and smashed together. They said the waves were the product of a collision between two black holes roughly 30 times the mass of the sun, located 1.3 billion light years from Earth.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have detected gravitational waves. We did it," said California Institute of Technology physicist David Reitze, triggering applause at a packed news conference in Washington.

"It's been a very long road, but this is just the beginning," Louisiana State University physicist Gabriela Gonzalez told the news conference, touting the opening of a new era in astronomy.

The scientific milestone was achieved using a pair of giant laser detectors in Louisiana and Washington state, capping a decades-long quest to find these waves.

"The colliding black holes that produced these gravitational waves created a violent storm in the fabric of space and time, a storm in which time speeded up, and slowed down, and speeded up again, a storm in which the shape of space was bent in this way and that way," Caltech physicist Kip Thorne said.

After detecting the gravitational wave signal, the scientists said they converted it into audio waves and were able to listen to the sounds of the two black holes merging. REUTERS

Einstein's theory

Einstein in 1916 proposed the existence of gravitational waves as an outgrowth of his ground-breaking general theory of relativity, which depicted gravity as a distortion of space and time triggered by the presence of matter. But until now scientists had found only indirect evidence of their existence.

WHY IS HILLARY KEEPING HER SPEECHES SO SECRET?

THE FOREMAN OPINION

TOM FOREMAN

Let's do the math. Hillary Clinton has been paid $21.6 million dollars for 92 speeches in the past few years. That's roughly $235,000 per appearance. An hour at each event would be $3,917 a minute. At 160 words per minute, that's about $24 per word.

So, "Hi, I am Hillary Clinton. Thank you for having me here tonight," equals $288 — or just about a week's work at minimum wage. And her campaign wonders why people are curious about what she said in those speeches.

But when pressed to release transcripts — especially of her speeches to the big banking firms she promises to be tough on — her answer in the most recent Democratic candidates' debate was: "I will look into it."

Her campaign's handling of this whole matter seems to be the political equivalent of smearing yourself with Nutella and jumping into a cage of howler monkeys. Why? First, when your Democratic opponent is not so subtly suggesting you are deep in the pocket of Wall Street, you don't want to be caught carrying a suitcase full of cash out of a private meeting with the little Monopoly-player-men — even metaphorically.

Second, when you just got ripped in New Hampshire, in part because many voters don't exactly trust you, you can't make it look like you're hiding something.

And third, when you're pounding on the idea that income disparity is a serious issue, it's hard to hear you when the chartered Gulf Stream is revving its engines to take you home.

Clinton insists that there were no shenanigans; she did not exchange favors or influence for those whopping checks.

She gave her speeches, ate some chicken and went on her way. Fair enough. So far there is no evidence to suggest otherwise.

But why she took any money from such groups while even flirting with a possible presidential bid is baffling.

The optics are simply a mess. Advice to Camp Clinton: You're looking into it? Look a little faster. Because a lot of people, including many of your fans, can already tell you it doesn't look good.

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Ryan Reynolds is done with *superheroes*

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Behind that mask lurks Ryan Reynolds, who plays a man turned into a hideous but indestructible superhero in "Deadpool." JOE LEDERER

THE FUN STARTS HERE

But he's definitely into "Deadpool," which isn't your typical comic book movie.

LUBA EGOROVA
Metro World News
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You might not remember it but Ryan Reynolds has played reluctant avenging superhero Wade Wilson, aka Deadpool, before. The character popped up briefly in "X-Men Origins: Wolverine." But that film was serious, whereas the new "Deadpool" is not. Over the years the actor, 39, has expanded his range and played dramatic roles in films such as "Buried" and "Mississippi Grind." With "Deadpool" he brings back the quipping Reynolds of "Two Girls and a Pizza Place" and "Just Friends," cracking jokes as his comic book star lays waste to the people who transformed him from an everyguy into a deformed, indestructible freak hidden under a cool suit and mask.

This seems like a role that really brings the best out of you.
I humbly agree! It's the role I've been most passionate about. I love everything about that boy! I am very grateful that I was given a chance to do this movie. I didn't think I ever would.

You spend most of the movie with a mask over your face. It can be difficult, it seems, to act when your most expressive feature is concealed.
Yes, it is. At first I was scared, because I thought, how are we going to tell the story? We had the option to take off the mask a lot more. But we found that we could push through the mask pretty well. I could express myself much better than I thought I could.

Have you ever wanted to become an avenger like Deadpool? Have you ever wanted to kill someone?
Wow! Kill? I never wanted to kill someone in real life, but I've wanted to come really close to that. I usually just say how I feel. If you're honest, you sleep better at night compared to when you're pretending to like someone. If someone's mean or awful, I'll just say, "You're f—king mean." ... That's good for them and good for me. I never wanted to take someone's life — not yet, at least.

You played Hal Jordan in "Green Lantern." Who would win: him or Deadpool?
I suppose that Deadpool would anger Green Lantern so much that he would use his magic ring to commit suicide.

Will there be other Deadpool movies? And would you continue to play him?
I've been Deadpool for 11 years already. It's my alter ego. That's why I took the movie. Even my wife [Blake Lively] sometimes asks, "Who am I talking to: Ryan or Deadpool?" So I would play Deadpool for as long as I can walk. He'd probably look strange in a wheelchair. I don't know whether there will be more films about Deadpool. If we get a chance to shoot something, I hope we keep it in the same style. We do not have the same budget as they did on "The Avengers." Although if you compare them, "Deadpool" does not look worse. It is possible to make films with less money.

At first, the studio didn't want to shoot the film. You made a test video, which somehow reached the Internet. After watching it, fans persuaded the studio to shoot "Deadpool." Are you the man behind the leak?
I know such rumors exist. But the truth is that I did not leak it.

Are there other major superhero characters you would like to play?
I will never play another superhero again. I'm done. You have to make room for other actors.

GETTY IMAGES

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Dakota Johnson and Rebel Wilson are gleefully unattached in "How To Be Single." BARRY WETCHER

"How to Be Single"

Director: Christian Ditter
Stars: Dakota Johnson, Rebel Wilson
Rating: R

●●○○○

"Deadpool" and "How to Be Single" don't have much in common. One's a Marvel romp, the other a rowdy rom-com. But they share one major trait: They're both self-aware genre entries that say they're different but secretly totally aren't. "Single" openly brags about being an anti-rom-com — an antidote to all those movies, like "Bridget Jones," and shows, like "Sex and the City," that look down on solitary characters, pitying them for foolishly never locating their soulmate.

Of course, it's definitely that kind of movie, written by people who've perfected the art. The source novel comes from author Liz Tuccillo, whose "He's Just Not That Into You" was also turned into a movie touting tough-love credentials before collapsing into happy endings. "Singles" is tougher than that, at least allowing its characters — Johnson's Alice, Leslie Mann's workaholic doctor, plus a smarmy bartender (Anders Holm) who's got commitmentphobia down to a science — to enjoy boozy nights and random hookups, at least until it turns around and reminds us that love conquers all.

"Single" turns into a movie about finding one's self, so of course it can't figure out what it is. Luckily it's usually either an engagingly dirty comedy or a warm comfort food romance. Gleefully R-rated, it likes to slip in comic ringers — most prominently Rebel Wilson, as a proudly single girl always up for trolling for Ds — to ad lib up a storm (and puff up the running time). It's like a studio version of last year's indie "Sleeping With Other People," only without that one's balance between hilarity and heart. That film earned its fuzzy, typical wrap-up, whereas this one is always inching toward a paean to the solitary life that it only half believes is healthy. MATT PRIGGE

"Green Lantern" star Ryan Reynolds gets a second chance to launch a comic book franchise with the intentionally funny "Deadpool." JOE LEDERER

"Deadpool"

Director: Tim Miller
Stars: Ryan Reynolds, Morena Baccarin
Rating: R

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A Marvel movie for those who think they're sick of Marvel movies but aren't really, "Deadpool" is as epically pleased with itself as Ryan Reynolds' lead performance. It proudly flaunts its depravities — bad words, head shots, a gleefully amoral protagonist — like a cat sitting next to milk it keeps spilling. Where "Ant-Man" only gently nudged weary conventions, "Deadpool" goes full throttle into attack mode, with a character who breaks the fourth wall to mock Marvel movies directly, even taking potshots at the listless "Green Lantern" movie that once starred Reynolds himself.

When he started out as a sitcom star and comedy movie staple, Reynolds could be unbearably manic, every eyebrow arch and head tilt delivered with robotic efficiency, his self-love squeezing all life from the jokes. He's tried hard to get away from that, to seem actually human in films like "Buried" and "Mississippi Grind." "Deadpool" brings the old shtick back with a vengeance. Throughout this origin story (see, it's not so different after all!), Reynolds' Wade Wilson contracts cancer and winds up transformed by a sadistic mad scientist (Ed Skrein) into an unkillable but deformed monster. But even at his worst Wilson/Deadpool never passes up an opportunity to prance or to turn his head to the camera, midshoot-out, to crack, "S—, did I leave the gas on?"

If you find that joke gut-busting rather than just mildly humorous, then you'll love "Deadpool," whose every pore teems with easy, oft-bro-ish jokes, many aimed at man-children who, like Reynolds, grew up in the '80s and '90s. Marvel oversaturation makes it easy to overrate a comic book movie that cares about every square inch of its script — one that's going out of its way to entertain in all caps. It's a film so cocksure about being the greatest movie ever that even its affable bits start to seem suspect. MP

"Zoolander 2," with Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson, makes jokes about how lame it is. PARAMOUNT PICTURES

"Zoolander 2"

Director: Ben Stiller
Stars: Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson
Rating: PG-13

●●○○○

There are scores of jokes in "Zoolander 2" about making a very, very belated sequel to the original, which came out so long ago the children who were entering first grade then are about to start paying back their college debt. There are no jokes, however, about it being a standard-issue lazy sequel — the kind that brings back the stuff that worked for a tired retread while adding little that's new.

Released in 2001, the first "Zoolander" was spotty but with fits of inspiration — the kind of comedy where a handful of strong bits helped one forget the surrounding mediocrity. The best found Ben Stiller's knuckle-scraping model enjoying a Wham!-backed jaunt on the town, which inexplicably turned into a gasoline fight, with fiery results. That segment gets a callback in "Zoolander 2," and naturally it's nowhere near as funny. Ditto the return of Billy Zane and another left-field music god cameo. The original boasted a walk-on from David Bowie; this one gets Sting, which charitably sums up the step-down in quality.

And yet what "Zoolander 2" lacks in creativity — with not a single stand-alone moment that will live on as a YouTube clip — it occasionally almost makes up for in super-weirdness. Here's a movie that kicks off with a 9/11 joke, crafts a dense and bizarre mythology about models and ends with one character dating Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai.

It keeps on piling on silliness (and famous faces) in the hopes that quantity equals quality. Sometimes it hits. Sometimes it decidedly does not. Eventually — as with "Dirty Grandpa" — the pure commitment to being stupid pays off in a sense: assaulting viewers with failed jokes creates a form of Stockholm Syndrome. As the movie soldiers on, you might find yourself laughing, but you may never remember why. MP

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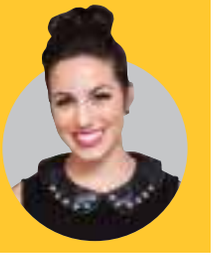
Laurie Davis is the founder of eFlirt, an online dating concierge service, and the best-selling author of "Love @ First Click: The Ultimate Guide to Online Dating."



Valentine's Day dread is out and first dates with Cupid as your wingman are in. According to a Zoosk study, 75 percent of singles would be more likely to say "yes" to a first date on Valentine's Day.

This is a major shift from years past. When I started helping singles date online in 2009, they tended to avoid logging into their dating profiles for the entire week. But with apps, people aren't afraid to meet on a whim (or on a holiday). So even though Valentine's Day is near, keep swiping!

When you're meeting for the first time on Valentine's, planning is the most important way to make it a success. Not because you need a fancy reservation, quite the opposite — you want to ensure things stay casual.

Here are my do's and don'ts to help your first date on the 14th turn into a second one later in the week.

Go on a day date

Since Valentine's Day falls on a Sunday, make daytime plans. You won't run into as many couples during the day ... which means it'll be less likely that you'll encounter someone else's proposal.

Do an activity together

Counteract the seriousness of the holiday by doing something fun for both of you, like trivia night or karaoke. It will be more spontaneous, even if you planned it a few days in advance.

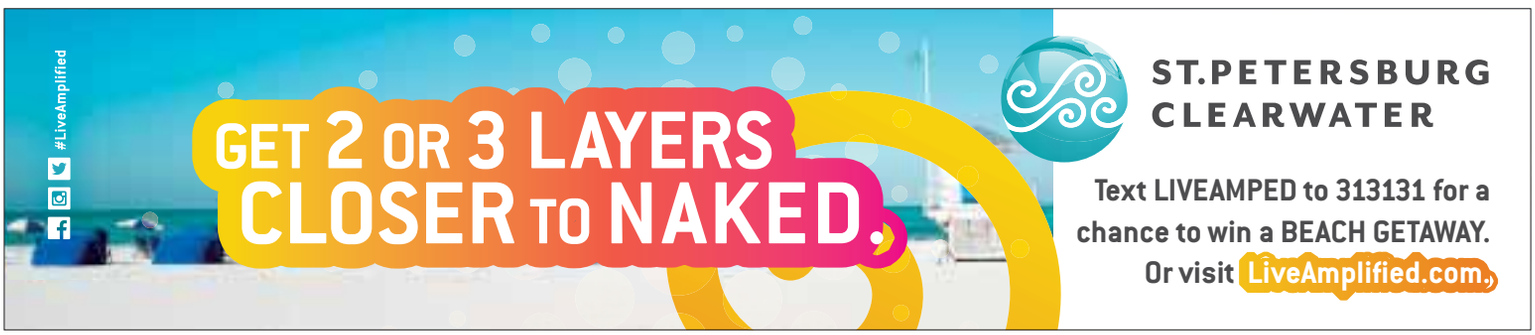
Gag gifts only, please

Treat a first date on Valentine's Day like any other first date — no gifts or flowers. Unless of course, you're bringing something funny to break the ice, like a grade school-style Valentine.

Don't force a connection

A first date on Valentine's Day may be a meet-cute, but don't create unrealistic expectations. Since your date falls on the Hallmark holiday, you may find yourself more hopeful that things will work out.

Sometimes, when my clients get overly excited about a match, they don't end up happy with the date because they went in expecting something spectacular. So when you're walking out the door, try to remember that ultimately, Valentine's is just another day on the calendar.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Swoon alert: Anderson East spills the beans

"I don't usually get that deep."

RACHEL RACZKA
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We're not allowed to talk about Miranda Lambert during our phone conversation with musician Anderson East. The Athens, Alabama-bred musician isn't going to answer any questions about his personal life, thankyouverymuch. Though all we need to know is peppered throughout Lambert's Instagram account that documents their canoodling and confirmed relationship.

But that's OK. East is entitled to his privacy, and he has plenty more to talk about. The 27-year-old singer-songwriter just kicked off the "Devil in Me" tour, and has the first single off producer Dave Cobb's new powerhouse compilation, "Southern Family," due March 18, alongside the likes of Zac Brown, Jason Isbell, Chris Stapleton and yes, Ms. Lambert.

He calls us from Richmond, Virginia, where he's eating a cup of bean stew.

What's with the stew — is this how you stay healthy on the road?
I'm trying to pack on the nutrients. I don't let myself think about getting sick, but it's really just sleep and water and you're pretty good. Usually the Irish whiskey will kill all the bad, and a humidifier because it gets so dry and my Southern nostrils don't like it.

Your birth name is Michael Cameron Anderson, so what made you take on a stage name?
I think at the time I was tired of myself, to be honest with you. I needed some kind of mental construct to have a difference between me being the guy that pays the phone bill and me being the guy who wants to say something profound.

But what's the significance of East?
I wanted a fresh beginning, and the sun rises there, and everything in mythology begins in the East. There's where everything starts.

That's pretty deep.
I know. I don't usually get that deep.

How did you get involved with Cobb's "Southern Family"?
That was pretty natural. Dave had been wanting to do this record for a while, and me and him have been friends for a long time. It's a real honor for all of us [to be on the album] — me especially. There are a lot of people I look up to greatly on there, and I'm sure others feel that way, too.

The musicians on "Southern Family" all wrote their songs about their perspectives on growing up in the South, what does "Learning" mean to you?
That title is such a broad title because it means so much to people in so many different ways. For me, I just wanted to write a tune for my old man. I wanted to tell him thanks and that I appreciate him caring so much and being there for me and being so supportive. He was a hard ass when he needed to be, for sure, but it's more of a "thank you" letter.

Were you with him when he heard it for the first time?
No, but everyone keeps asking whether or not he's heard it. I was kind of embarrassed, but I sent it to him the day before it came out, and was like, "I hope you like it, or whatever." He called back very tender afterward, so I assume he liked it.

If you go:

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East gets deep. BECKY FLUKE

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Islanders in odd spot before NHL deadline

The Kyle Okposo situation looms as we get closer to the Feb. 29 deadline.

ROBERT CRISCOLA
@ItsGood2BeKing
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Kyle Okposo could be on the move despite leading the steady Islanders in points. GETTY IMAGES

Kyle Okposo is leading the Islanders in points (42) and is third on the team in goals (15), but there's a realistic chance he'll be in a different uniform by next season.

Okposo is in the final year of a five-year, $14 million contract that carries an annual salary cap of $2.8 million. The Islanders will have an estimated $18 million available in salary cap space this offseason (per The Hockey News' projections, and assuming GM Garth Snow is allowed to spend to the ceiling), but Okposo isn't the only Islander coming off the books.

Frans Nielsen is also due for a raise after playing through a team-friendly four-year, $11 million pact, and RFAs Casey Cizikas, Ryan Strome and Scott Mayfield will more than likely command a higher combined salary than their present $4.5 million.

Blueliner Travis Hamonic, who filled in admirably while Johnny Boychuk missed time this season, will also be looking for a new deal this summer.

This puts the Isles, who are in the thick of the postseason race, in a precarious situation. And so far they've been sitting on their hands.

By Okposo's own admission there's been "no dialogue" regarding a contract extension, and there have been no substantial rumors tying Okposo to any other NHL club. But the 27-year-old power forward is apparently at peace with the situation.

"Anybody that tells you that they don't think about it at all is lying," Okposo told ESPN earlier this season. "[But] I'm fine with just going out there and playing and trying to do everything I can to help this team. I think we have enough here to be there in June and to be the best team in the league. That's definitely my main focus."

Isles captain John Tavares recently gave his linemate a ringing endorsement, which will make it harder for Garth Snow to let Okposo go.

"He's a big leader for our team, someone I really rely on, really lean on to help me not just on the ice but off it," Tavares told ESPN, "It's a lot more than just putting up numbers … how he works, how he's setting an example … that goes a long way, especially for a guy that's been through all the ups and downs here."

The potential haul for Okposo could be large should the Islanders decide to trade him; the Blackhawks surrendered a first round pick and a prospect to the Coyotes for Antoine Vermette at last year's deadline. And the Devils garnered a second and third round pick from the Panthers for Jaromir Jagr. Okposo is worth at least that much if not more to a contending team, regardless of his impending free agency. It's a lot to risk should Okposo decide to sign elsewhere this summer.

The Islanders have prospects like Michael Dal Colle and Mathew Barzal ready to fill in should Okposo depart, but that kind of move will trigger thoughts of "same old Islanders." And with attendance already flagging at the Barclays Center, the Islanders can't afford that negative publicity.

The Mets are money

The first total win over/unders of the 2016 MLB season were posted this week by Atlantis Casino sportsbook, and the Mets are projected to have the third highest win total in the Majors behind only the San Francisco Giants (90 wins) and the Chicago Cubs (89). The Mets' over/under is currently 88 wins. The Yankees are slotted for 85 wins. GETTY IMAGES

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number TBA, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 255 Berry St., Partial Ground Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11249, for on-premises consumption. Ramen on the Hill, Inc.

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SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF QUEENS

CITIMORTGAGE, INC., Plaintiff -against- TEEPU KHAN, et al Defendant(s). Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered herein and dated August 13, 2015, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Queens County Supreme Courthouse 88-11 Sutphin Blvd in Courtroom #25, Jamaica NY on February 19, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. premises situate, lying and being in the Borough and County of Queens, City and State of New York, being more particularly bounded and described as follows: BEGINNING at a point on the northerly side of Lockwood Court, distant 365.00 feet westerly from the corner formed by the intersection of the northerly side of Lockwood Court with the westerly side of 104th Street; being a plot of 27.50 feet by 80 feet by 27.5 feet by 80.00 feet.

Said premises known as 102-07 LOCKWOOD COURT, HOWARD BEACH, NY Approximate amount of lien $ 566,930.08 plus interest & costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment and Terms of Sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. Index Number 13550/2010.

DIANA C. GIANTURCO, ESQ., Referee Sweeney Gallo Reich & Bolz, LLP Attorney(s) for Plaintiff 95-25 Queens Blvd, 11th Floor, Rego Park, NY, 11374

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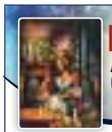

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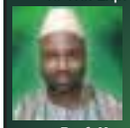

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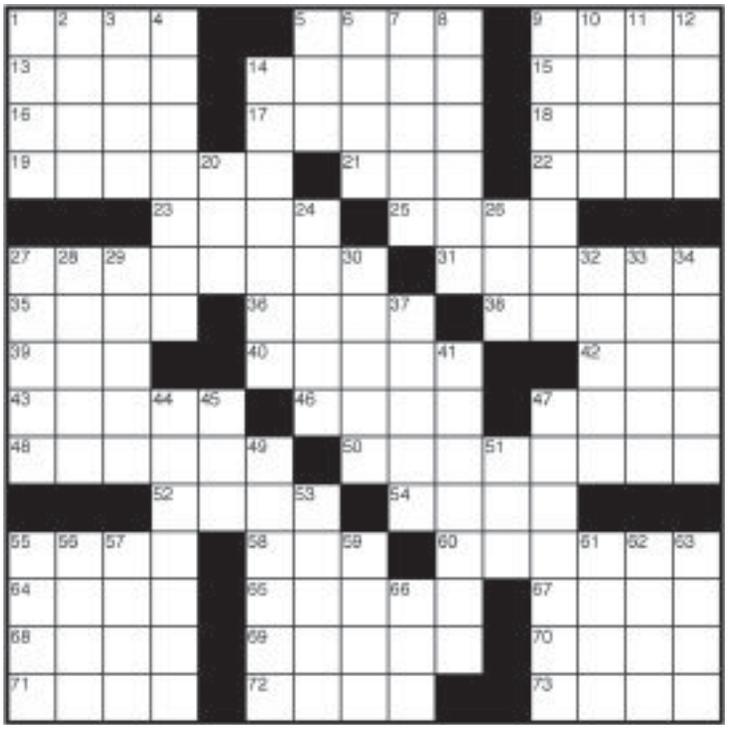

Across

1 Red on the inside
5 Like cheetahs
9 Outback mineral
13 Viking name
14 Ventricle neighbor
15 Bud holder
16 Explorer — Erikson
17 Bramble
18 Great gusto
19 Cream puff
21 Pond maker
22 Lemon peel
23 Fossilized plants
25 Smidgens
27 Great brightness
31 Chin features
35 Gaslight and Big Band
36 Plenty, to a poet
38 — incognita
39 Tolerated
40 Monet contemporary
42 Friction easer
43 Good conductor
46 Start all over
47 Machu Picchu founder
48 Pale
50 Gave money back
52 Kind of ticket
54 Foolhardy
55 She loved Lennon
58 Float like a cork
60 Sawmill output
64 Revival shout
65 Rock tumbler stone
67 Oaf
68 Smaller than compact
69 Well-known
70 Ferber or Millay
71 Portico
72 Thin Man's terrier
73 Big bucks?

Down

1 Butler, to Gable
2 Sir — Guinness
3 Means of shipping
4 Blots out
5 Debate side
6 Dry as dust
7 Place
8 Runway surface
9 Be the boss
10 Sanskrit dialect
11 Cold — — icicle
12 What libraries do
14 Rubbed against
20 Ca++, for one
24 Solitude enjoyer
26 Diner sandwich
27 Alabama town
28 Groom carefully
29 Starbucks order
30 Pilot's OK
32 Palm branch
33 In a — (quickly)
34 Dinner course
37 Heron or egret
41 Overnight guest's spot (2 wds.)
44 Smelling salts
45 Kind of detector
47 Got some air
49 Bathhouse
51 Canteen initials
53 Alligators on shirts
55 Edible tubers
56 Leave out
57 Vegas game
59 Fiberglass bundle
61 Grabbed a cab
62 Kind of buggy
63 Galaxy unit
66 Drink with scones

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easy

1	7		6			2		
2	9		5			3		
				2			9	
4		1		5				2
	6						1	
3				6		7		4
	4			9				
		2			5		4	8
		5			2		6	7

hard

8		5	9				1	
7						9		3
		6	3		5			
5			2	3	8		9	
				7				
	6		5	9	1			7
			8		3	2		
3		2						1
	5				4	8		9

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Protect your heart and control your emotions. Making assumptions will lead to mistakes. Take time to assess and formulate what you want, and do your best to make it happen.

Taurus If you think about possibilities, you will have an eye-opening experience. The chance to make a dream come true and share it with someone special is within reach.

Gemini Don't let uncertainty confuse you. Think matters through and determine the changes that will bring the highest returns, and start heading in that direction.

Cancer You may not like what someone else is doing, but that shouldn't stop you from heading in the direction that suits you best. Let your desire for love lead the way.

Leo Take on some responsibility if you want to prove that you can make a difference. A chance to show off your skills will result in recognition and a reputation for getting things done.

Virgo Take the initiative to let someone know how much you care. Offering some incentive to others will ensure that you get the help you need to put your plans in motion.

Libra Don't let the actions or words of others get to you. An intelligent approach to the things you want to do or see happen will give you the strength and courage to proceed.

Scorpio Do everything in your power to achieve your goals. A physical challenge will allow you to step up and show everyone what you are capable of handling.

Sagittarius You've got to rethink your strategy if you don't want someone to criticize your choices. Too much of anything will lead to trouble. Move forward with compassion.

Capricorn Your ability to take advantage of whatever situation you face will give you a competitive edge. Romance will bring you stability and enhance your personal life.

Aquarius A dedicated, disciplined approach to getting what you want will far exceed attempts to bully someone into doing things your way. If you avoid arguments, you'll have no regrets.

Pisces How you present yourself and what you have to offer will make a difference. If you are responsible and help those in need, you will be compensated. EUGENIA LAST

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